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OF THE

UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON THE HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

STOCKHOLM, SWEDEN

JUNE 5 - 16, 1972

Submitted to the SECRETARY OF STATE

Christian A. Herter, Jr.
Christian A. Herter, Jr.
Vice Chairman of Delegation

July 28, 1972

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OF THE
UNITED STATES DELEGATION
TO THE
UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON THE HUMAN ENVIRONMENT
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SUMMARY

On the whole, the Conference was a considerable success in terms of U.S. interests. 109 action proposals were approved. We supported all but two - one dealing with compensation for the LDCs, the other with an international fund for housing.

As to the Declaration, it was finally approved by acclamation, with the exception of the PRC who simply could not accept the provision on the effect of nuclear weapons on the environment. On this issue the PRC was totally isolated.

With respect to Institutional Arrangements, after intensive negotiation, a very complete resolution was accepted providing for an Executive Director, a 54-country Governing Council, an Interagency Coordinating Board, and a Fund. The result is largely satisfactory to us.

On the Fund, 6 countries in addition to the U.S. have pledged specific amounts. A dozen or more countries additionally have pledged a contribution but without naming a figure. It is fair to assume that we will get pledges for the full \$100 million.

Congress has already indicated by resolution that it is broadly in favor of such a fund.

The PRC, with Tanzania and Algeria, pursued throughout a fairly activist radical line. They did not prevail and there was no major confrontation between the DCs and LDCs. In fact, an extraordinary willingness to get results was manifested in both camps. Brazil, Egypt, and India were particularly helpful.

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Canada and France were unhelpful; the UK gave us unusually fine support.

The USSR did not attend, nor any of the Eastern Bloc except Rumania and Yugoslavia. No one seemed to care.

The Specialized Agencies fought us every inch of the way on the proposed Institutional Arrangements.

Maurice Strong and his Secretariat did an outstanding job both during the preparatory period and at the Conference itself.

The U.S. Delegation (35 delegates, 25 technical advisers) was constructive, interested, and held together. The Delegation included 11 members of Congress.

However, any delegation this size is difficult to handle and requires special attention. In particular, where the White House participates in the Conference and has appointed a number of delegates, extra effort must be undertaken with respect to both administrative arrangements and public relations.

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1. Soviet Bloc Participation

Romania and Yugoslavia were the only countries from Eastern Europe to attend the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment. The Soviet Union and other Eastern European countries boycotted the Conference because the Western powers would not allow East Germany to attend the Conference as a full-fledged participating member of the United Nations. It is worth noting that the absence of the Soviet Delegation was only mentioned in passing by four or five speakers and the Conference went on without them. No one seemed to care whether they were absent or not.

Neither Romania nor Yugoslavia played a major role in the Conference deliberations, although Yugoslavia worked constantly for an acceptable Declaration, particularly in regard to Principle 26 concerning the use of nuclear weapons

2. PRC Participation

The People's Republic of China sent a 16-man delegation to Stockholm and their delegates attended all of the Conference sessions. Their role was a strange one, however. They rarely spoke or voted in any of the committees or in the Plenary itself on substantive issues. Their general debate speech was so highly critical of the United States that the United States exercised its right of reply and urged in a low-key tone that political issues should not be discussed in this forum.

The PRC from the outset of the Conference sought to establish a leadership role with the Third World, particularly the Africans and Asians. They immediately urged that the draft Declaration be reopened for further discussion even though the document before the Conference was the result of months of exhaustive negotiation and many countries urged that it be accepted without amendment. The PRC sentiment was shared by a number of other developing countries.

The PRC was primarily interested in eliminating in the Declaration any reference to nuclear weapons and their

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effect on the environment, a principle which the rest of the world insisted on retaining. Even the United States was able to agree on the language which was finally approved, and at the end of the Conference, when the Declaration was adopted by acclamation, the PRC insisted it be recorded as not voting. It was totally isolated. At an earlier stage of the proceedings, it found itself with France and Gabon as the only countries voting against a ban on atmospheric testing.

There is no question that the members of the PRC delegation were inexperienced at conducting themselves in an international conference and earlier concessions made by their delegation were obviously countermanded in Peking. The entire experience must have been humiliating.

The Chinese speeches and their general attitude were blunt, uncooperative and in most instances without finesse. They did not negotiate - they merely pronounced. Their role appeared to be one of spoiler and propagandist with virtually no interest in substantive proposals. A Latin American (Mr. Eglesias of Uruguay) told a member of the United States Delegation that he had asked a member of the PRC Delegation why they had painted themselves into a corner on the Draft Declaration since the Chinese were widely respected for their wisdom and experience. He was told "We have ample wisdom but no experience."

3. Sweden

The President of the Conference, Mr. Bengtsson, was an able and effective Chairman and succeeded in maintaining the Conference schedule. Two working members of the Swedish Delegation also did an extraordinary job. Dr. Hans Blix represented his Government in the prolonged negotiations on the Draft Declaration and Mr. Ove Heyman chaired the informal Working Group discussions on institutional arrangements. Both delegates performed in an outstanding manner and were a credit to their Delegation and to their country.

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4. Brazil

Because the PRC, and to some extent Tanzania and Algeria, tended to preempt the traditional extremist LDC positions, Brazil found itself working very closely with the United States and other countries that had participated extensively in the preparations for the Conference. Brazil had played a constructive part in negotiating a draft declaration and resolution on institutional arrangements and rather than go along with efforts to change these documents, Brazil defended them stoutly.

In addition, through their chairmanship of Committee III, dealing with environmental pollution and institutional arrangements, they made it quite clear that an advanced developing country was completely capable of handling such a position.

Ambassador Carlos Calero Rodrigues, Chairman of Committee III, conducted the work of the Committee with ability, clarity and effectiveness. In addition, he showed courage and skill in the Plenary when he spoke in support of the draft resolution on institutional arrangements and was able to convince the Algerian Delegation to withdraw an amendment which would have seriously undermined the effectiveness of the resolution. Mention should also be made of the outstanding work of Bernardo Brito of the Brazilian Delegation who worked long, hard and effectively on the problems of institutional arrangements and the draft declaration.

5. France

The French Delegation was generally speaking, uncooperative and unconstructive, particularly with respect to institutional arrangements. It should be pointed out, however, the Ministry of Environment is pushing very hard to get a contribution to the Fund from the French Ministry of Finance.

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6. Australia

Single-handedly the Australian Delegation forced the expansion of the previously agreed size of the Governing Council from 48 to 54 members. This was done for purely nationalistic reasons in an effort to ensure their participation in the Governing Council and all arguments with regard to efficiency passed them by.

7. Federal Republic of Germany

The Federal Republic of Germany did not fair well diplomatically. Their unending demand for membership on the Governing Council of the Fund, to be spelled out in writing and based on contributions to the Environmental Fund, was overbearing and clumsy, and led some Developing Countries to accuse them of trying to subject the Fund to the exclusive control of the donor countries.

8. Canada

The Canadian Delegation was most unhelpful on various occasions and in the opinion of some untrustworthy. Particularly, Mr. J. Allen Beesley was difficult and uncooperative throughout the complex negotiations on the draft declaration. He continually courted the PRC and at no time really supported the United States Delegation in advocating its position.

9. Egypt and India

Both countries were very useful with the less informed developing countries' delegations in persuading them to take a moderate and intelligent stand on the declaration and the resolution on institutional arrangements.

10. United Kingdom

The United Kingdom, having taken a very negative attitude throughout the Preparatory Committee meetings, fielded

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a high level delegation, including Mr. Peter Walker, Secretary of State for the Environment, and Mr. Eldon Griffiths, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Environment. Their contribution was effective, constructive, and forceful. They could not have been more cooperative with the United States.

11. Specialized Agencies

All of the major Specialized Agencies spent a considerable amount of time, energy and effort in lobbying with the developing world and certain Developed Countries (e.g., UNESCO with Belgium, IAEA with the United States) against the institutional arrangements resolution. They were all fearful that the resolution would place constraints on their own jurisdiction in the environmental field and were responsible for the introduction of various crippling amendments. The United States Delegation and others were aware of these lobbying efforts and in the vast majority of cases were able to prevent these amendments from passing.

12. Secretariat

Mr. Maurice Strong, the Secretary General of the Conference and his small staff, in cooperation with United Nations personnel and personnel from Sweden, performed in a magnificent manner and were successful in carrying out a major conference with success.

13. Miscellaneous

a. The "Group of Ten" caucussed every day and although there was by no means common agreement on many issues, we can expect to see the expanding Common Market acting more and more as a bloc in various international fora. Already this tendency is beginning to appear in the OECD.

b. Contrary to expectations, there was no major confrontation between developed and developing countries. The general seriousness and concern of the developing country

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delegations to achieve positive results was impressive and reassuring. It is most encouraging to realize that after two weeks there was virtually worldwide agreement on over 100 action proposals and the two specially sensitive subjects, the Declaration and the resolution on institutional arrangements.

14. U.S. Administrative Arrangements and Public Relations

If the United States ever fields as large a delegation again (35 delegates, 25 technical advisors) to an international conference, a strong administrative contingent should be on the spot well in advance of the arrival of the delegation. This is particularly true where the White House has selected some of the delegates, is represented itself on the delegation, and has a particular political interest in the welfare of its appointees.

The same admonition is valid with respect to public relations, when there is a distinct White House presence. The State Department on the whole is well geared up to handling normal press and media arrangements and in terms of substantive coverage of the Conference did a good job. After the first few days, when it became apparent that the press was not getting intelligent information about the Conference, daily press briefings were instituted and this helped a good deal in improving the tone of the coverage. These press briefings should have started the weekend before the Conference began.

Where the White House is concerned, however, there is a need for a special type of talent that, on the whole, the Department does not possess. The White House is very adept at creating publicity at any cost, including all sorts of public relations gimmickry and continuous photographic coverage. It is recommended that at future conferences of this kind, where there is a special White House interest, the White House be asked to send along the sort of specialized talent described above.

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15. The United States Delegation

The Delegation was too large for easy handling. It was possible, however, to give every member of the Delegation an assignment, if only for two or three days, as a member of a team dealing with a particular subject matter. Each team had professional staff support.

The entire delegation, including technical advisors, met every day at 8:30 with remarkably full and consistent attendance. These daily briefings normally were conducted by the Chairman, and provided the only opportunity to give the delegation the necessary instructions for the work at hand, to hear complaints, and to keep everyone abreast of what was going on.

In my judgment, where a delegation is as large as this one in the future, an officer should be assigned exclusively to handle both the personal and professional needs of its members. Even though the Embassy provided Control Officers for each delegate, a difficult feat considering the size of our Embassy in Stockholm, most of the Control Officers simply disappeared once they had their charges safely tucked away in a hotel room. It became necessary to correct this situation after the first two or three days.

Despite the size of the delegation, including about a dozen congressional representatives, and some very distinguished non-governmental individuals, all of whom could have behaved like prima donnas, the delegation was exemplary in terms of supporting previously agreed U.S. positions on a great variety of issues. By and large, the membership was both knowledgeable and interested, and hopefully had a sense of participation. With extremely few exceptions, the technical advisors did an outstanding job.

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